

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**

**September 18, 2001  
MEETING NO. 09-01**

**APPLICATION:** HDC01-0199

**DATE FILED:** August 30, 2001

**APPLICANT/  
OWNER:** William F. Jacob  
112 Forest Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850



**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:** The Presbyterian Manse, at 112 Forest Avenue, is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Forest and Beall Avenues, facing east. It is a 2 ½ story, Victorian house. It was built in 1890-91 and served as the official residence of the pastor of the Rockville Presbyterian Church for approximately a century. It is now a private home.

**PREVIOUS ACTIONS AT THIS ADDRESS:**

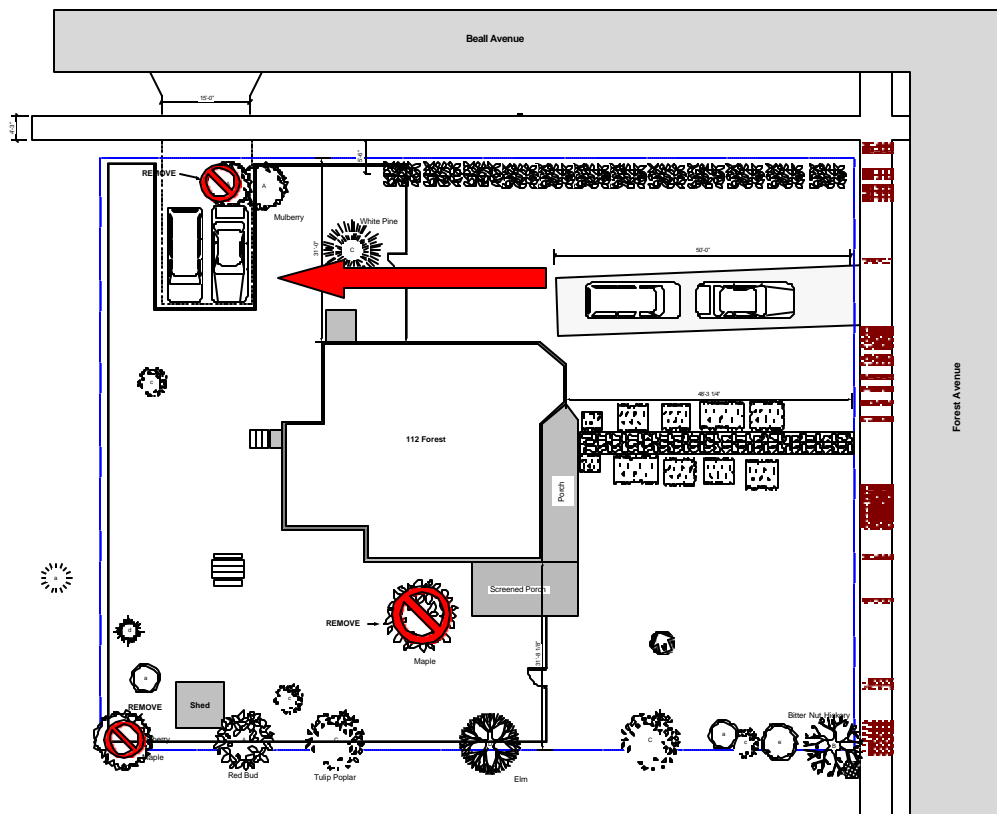
HDC95-0078	Tree Removal. Approved 3/19/96
HDC94-0054	Shed relocation. Approved 9/6/94
HDC94-0058	Dead tree removal. Approved 9/2/94
HDC99-0153	Tree removal, Approved 1/24/00 (staff approval)
HDC00-0170	Replace roof, ordinary maintenance. Approved 9/19/00

**REQUEST:**

The applicant requests a Certificate of Approval to:

1. Remove three matures trees: (a) A maple tree 6 feet from the south side of the house which is deteriorated and losing branches. (b) A mulberry and maple clump at the extreme southwest corner of the property which has rot and overhangs the neighbor's garage. (c) A mulberry at the northwest corner of the property to allow relocation of the driveway from the front yard to the rear of the house accessed from Beall.
2. Relocate driveway from front yard to rear of house accessed from Beall. The driveway apron to Beall was installed by the City. Applicant wishes to remove the front drive and parking area before the brick sidewalk is redone.
3. Regrade lot to eliminate low spots and water flow through property and into basement.

Front façade of 112 Forest Avenue



Property plan showing arrow from current to proposed driveway location  
⊘ trees to be removed.

**STAFF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Staff recommends approval of HDC01-0199 for tree removal, relocation of driveway, and regrading of lot.**

- 1. Historic, archeological, or architectural value and significance of the site or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area.*

The house at 112 Forest Avenue is a contributing resource to the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District. As the Presbyterian Manse, it reflects the growth of the Presbyterian congregation in Rockville during the latter half of the 19th century and its continuing cultural and physical presence in the West End during the 20th century.

- 2. The relationship of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the remainder of the entire structure and to the surrounding area.*

This Victorian house has had a driveway installed in the front yard, which is not consistent with the original design of a pre-automobile property or a historic streetscape. Relocating the driveway to the rear yard and accessing it from Beall Avenue would restore the original front lawn and vista of the house. The 100 block of Forest Avenue is maintained as a historic streetscape without modern curbs and gutters. At present, storm water drains from Forest Avenue down the front driveway and forms pools of standing water before flowing through the property to Beall Avenue. The storm run-off carries oil, debris, dirt, and gravel onto the property and the water has infiltrated into the basement. The house has had minor alterations, mostly to the rear of the house and the interior.

- 3. The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.*

Relocation of the driveway would allow restoration of the front lawn, which is desirable. The paving material for the rear two-car parking pad would be concrete or brick pavers, which is acceptable, especially since it will be less visible and not intrude upon the historic streetscape. One mulberry tree would be removed to accommodate the driveway/parking pad. There are two mulberry trees in this area and one would remain. Staff recommends removal of both mulberries and replacement with a landscape quality tree if the owner desires. Mulberry trees are not considered landscape material but weed trees and the berries and resulting bird residue is not compatible with a parking area. Relocation of the driveway would also reduce water flow into the property by extending the unbroken brick sidewalk across the front to the corner of Beall.

The removal of the deteriorated maple tree that is 6 feet from the structure is also recommended for the protection of the structure. A large shade tree is generally recommended to be planted 20 to 30 feet from a structure. The maple/mulberry clump in the southwest corner is not a landscape specimen, is structurally damaged, and removal is recommended.

4. *To any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.*

The City Forester inspected other trees on this property in 1999 in response to application HDC99-0153 and noted problems with the trees in HDC01-0199. The email said:

“While on the site I noticed several other trees they should have a private arborist inspect. One is the large maple adjacent to the house and the Mulberry next to the neighbors garage at the back of the lot.”